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Dear High School Colleagues

SSACI and the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association would like to thank those of you who attended the recent 2005 Financial Aid Workshop for Counselors throughout the state of Indiana.

The Workshops included information concerning enhancements to this section of the SSACI website (Counselor Information) that now gives you an additional avenue to check on program advisories and announcements involving the SSACI programs for your students who are interested in pursuing higher education.

#### NEWS#1

Answers to questions posed by High School Guidance Counselors during the 2005 High School Guidance Counselor Workshops:

- 1)  What are the criteria that need to be met in order for a student to keep 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholarship eligibility when a student chooses to attend or defer attending college? Are these enhanced criteria from past practices?

 The text referenced below is not a new requirement.


Reference:


1. 2005-2006 AFFIRMATION FORM (one-third down on the page although has been a part of affirmation action and exit interview since program inception). "Remember, regardless of whether you attend or you defer in order to Keep your Eligibility for Twenty-first Century Scholars Award, you MUST:
  - Submit your completed Affirmation Form on or before March 10<sup>th</sup> of your senior year.
  - File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) every year by the FAFSA deadline for Indiana. Begin college and be a full-time student no later than December 31, 2008"(if utilizing the 2005-2006 Affirmation Form, otherwise the year changes accordingly)
2. Website: <http://www.in.gov/ssaci/programs/21st/pdf/FAQScholarProg.pdf> Answer to Question #6: ...."Students also must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the March deadline each of the years they delay college enrollment." Answer to Question #7: ...."Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the March deadline during the senior year of high school. Note that the FAFSA must be submitted every year by the March Deadline the

semester prior to a student attending college and fix any errors on your FAFSA by the June deadline. Respond by set deadlines to any Request for additional information from the Scholars program, the State Student Assistance Commission or their college.”

3. Exit Interview:

An exit interview is conducted by the staff of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Scholarship Program during the student’s senior year in high School that contains the review of the criteria stated above.

- 2)  What is the difference between the Core 40 and Academic Honors Diploma for SSACI versus the Core 40 and Academic Honors Diploma for the Indiana Department of Education Diploma? Does this difference matter when determining which students to report on the Core 40 and Honors Internet Update System (CHIPS Reporting)?

 Yes, as the requirements for obtaining a Core 40 Diploma and Academic Honors Diploma are different particularly if the student is applying for the monetary awards through SSACI.

SSACI Awarding Requirements:

\*Core 40 Diploma – Student must complete IDOE prescribed Core 40 curriculum with cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale

\*AHD Diploma – Student must complete IDOE prescribed AHD curriculum with cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Indiana Department of Education Requirements (IDOE):

\*Core 40 Diploma-Student must complete IDOE prescribed Core 40 curriculum, no minimum grade point average required

\*AHD-Student must complete IDOE prescribed, AHD curriculum with “B” average, no class less than a “C”. (Each school sets the scale to determine “B” grade)

Therefore, it is possible to be awarded a Core 40 Diploma or Academic Honors Diploma by the high school for Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) purposes, but not meet SSACI’s GPA requirements for Academic Honors Diploma or Core 40 Diploma monetary awards. The high school representative who is completing the CHIPS reporting process needs to make sure the SSACI criteria are being used.

**News #2**

"As you know the tax line references in the 2006-2007 Free Application for the Federal Student Aid On-Line Worksheet (FOTW) that was distributed by the Department of Education in October were blank in referencing the tax line items that normally appear on the FOTW Worksheet. The new version of FOTW with tax line items now included is available through the link below. Also included is a Reference Guide that may be placed as a stuffer with the stock you may have received from the Department of Education of the old FOTW version that has no tax line references. You will want to rely on either option on the link for completion of the FOTW by students/parents prior to completing the FAFSA On-line."

Link: <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/1122TaxLineRef.html>